

Blue Skyways Clean School Bus Collaborative
EPA Region 6 and the Ft. Still Apache Tribe

Geographic location or area of activity: Fort Sill Apache Tribe - Apache, OK (Southwestern Oklahoma) with a project concentration on Rural Schools in Caddo County, Oklahoma

Description of activity: More than 24 million children ride a bus to and from school everyday, spending roughly 3 billion hours on school buses each year. Recent studies suggest that children's school bus commutes potentially expose children to significantly higher concentrations of pollutants than what is measured in a community's ambient air. Children are more susceptible to air pollution due to immature respiratory systems, and having a faster breathing rate. The Blue Skyways Clean School Bus Grant was designed to reduce children's exposure to diesel exhaust from school buses. EPA's Clean School Bus USA initiative has three primary goals: 1) reduce school bus idling; 2) retrofit existing buses with devices and/or cleaner fuels that reduce pollution, and 3) replace the oldest buses with new, cleaner buses.

The Fort Sill Apache Tribe Environmental Program solicited all schools in Caddo County to be a part of the initiative, with four schools responding. Fleet Summaries and Fleet Information Table were completed, covering everything from the number of students who rode the buses to the annual vehicle miles traveled on the bus. The participating school's bus technicians were called upon to help retrieve all the needed info.

Through this grant the schools are given four options: 1) retrofits; 2) engine upgrades; 3) cleaner fuel; and 4) replacement (bus/engine). If a school decides to retrofit their bus by using EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) certified products, such as diesel oxidation catalyst, particulate filters, or closed crankcase systems, the Environmental Program can pay 100% of the total cost. Engine upgrades costs can be paid up to 50%, bus replacements 45%, engine replacements 50%. If a school chooses the cleaner fuel option the tribe will pay the differential cost between a cleaner fuel and the standard diesel fuel.

With the funding from the Blue Skyways grant, the Ft. Sill Apache Environmental Program has been able to help two of the four participating schools purchase new and cleaner buses. Carnegie Public School system was the first to purchase their bus for \$68,477, which the Fort Sill Apache Tribe Environmental Program contributed \$30,815. The second school to purchase their bus was Boone-Apache Public Schools for \$77,543, which we contributed \$34,894. Gracemont Public Schools and Cyril Public Schools will be purchasing new buses in the near future.

Interagency partners: EPA and the Ft. Sill Apache Tribe of Oklahoma

Local partners: Boone-Apache Public Schools, Carnegie Public Schools, Cyril Public Schools, Gracemont Public Schools